The Gun-owner Registration Information Protection (GRIP) Act

Summary: This bill seeks to prohibit the federal government from providing assistance to states or local entities for the storage or "listing" of sensitive, personal information related to the legal ownership or possession of firearms. It also clarifies that all federal agencies must refrain from such activities. This bill does <u>not</u> include any limitations related to state recordkeeping for permitting, law enforcement-issued firearms, or lost or stolen firearms.

• Endorsed by the National Rifle Association.

Why do we need the GRIP Act?

- In December 2012 and January 2013, a local New York newspaper and a Manhattan-based website published databases showing where licensed gun owners and permit holders lived in those areas. Federal funds should not contribute to state recordkeeping that could allow this kind of breach of privacy (http://cbsn.ws/1kbZaJX).
- Under current law (18 USC section 926(a)), the federal government may not store information acquired during the firearms background check process. This bill clarifies that prohibition and promotes consistency by extending the prohibition to federal funding to states as well.
- Recently, many states have passed a variety of gun laws. This bill seeks to reinforce the federal government's stance on firearms registries, even in a changing, political landscape.
- Several state supreme courts have decreed that storing personally identifiable
 information related to firearm purchases and ownership is not in violation of state
 laws, creating a loophole for the states to keep registries of gun owners. This
 legislation would ensure the federal government does not inappropriately support
 even partial registries of firearms information, even in the case of such a legal
 loophole.
- No current statutes or pending legislation addresses this issue.
- States benefit from federal grant programs, such as the National Criminal Histories Improvement Program (NCHIP), the NICS Amendment Records Improvement Program (NARIP), and the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program, to improve criminal recordkeeping and help fulfill reporting requirements. This bill would prevent states from using any of this funding to assist with the creation of a full or partial registry.